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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire was administered to 167 male students enrolled in occupational programs at Daytona Beach Junior College (Florida) to determine what factors influenced their enrollment. The responses of 121 students under 27 years of age were analyzed. Specific findings indicate that the typical student is a high school graduate, white, and between 20 and 21 years old. In addition, he appears to have some work experience, a definite occupational goal, and some degree of self-support. Subjecting student responses to the Chi-square test for statistical significance at the .05 confidence level indicates that: (1) career choices are firm; (2) the most desirable job characteristic is the security of a steady job; (3) self-employment aspirations were reported more often by non-high school graduates; and (4) school problems faced by black and white students differ. Also indicated by the responses: (1) family and friends influence career choice decisions more than do school personnel; (2) the aspiration and attitudes of high school dropouts show measurable differences from those of other students; and (3) students perceive enrolling in a vocational program as a temporary sacrifice of personal resources to assure eventual goal attainment. (JO)

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A SURVEY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATING FACTORS OF MALE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SELECTED CERTIFICATE OCCUPATIONAL CURRICULA AT DAYTONA BEACH JUNIOR COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

A SURVEY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATING FACTORS OF MALE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SELECTED CERTIFICATE OCCUPATIONAL CURRICULA AT DAYTONA BEACH JUNIOR COLLEGE

The purpose of this study was to obtain background information about the persons who enroll in occupational programs and determine what factors have motivated them to enroll. The method used was a survey of the 167 male students enrolled in twelve certificate programs during May and June, 1970 at Daytona Beach Junior College.

The survey instrument was developed after a study of published instruments which measure attitudes of students and after conferences with the professional staff at Stetson and DBJC. The structured-disguised questionnaire was pretested on a pilot group and the procedures for its administration were standardized. The instrument was administered to 164 male students and the 121 who were under twenty-seven years of age were selected for detailed analysis.

The normative data yielded answers to these questions: (1) who influenced the career choices; (2) the nature and extent of previous employment; (3) what aspects of the training and the job are found appealing; and (4) what are their stated aspirations and goals.

A study of the responses could lead to a generalization that the "typical" student is white, age 20 or 21, is a high school graduate, has had work experience, is self-supporting to some degree, and has a definite and firm occupational goal. This is based on the following specific findings:

1. Ninety per cent of the students have had work experience.
2. Eighty per cent are high school graduates.

3. Over ninety per cent of the students are white.
4. The students receive information regarding the occupation and the school from sources other than the institution.
5. Over two-thirds of the students report they would seek the training elsewhere if it were not available at DBJC.
6. Use of intellectual skills in learning technical data is not reported as disliked.

Chi-square tests were applied to the responses and the following findings yielded significance at the .05 confidence level:

1. Career choice and determination are firm.
2. Security in the form of a steady job is the most desirable job characteristic.
3. Eighty per cent of the students knew someone either engaged in, or training for, the occupation.

Based on the descriptive data, certain sub-groups were identified and the chi-square test was used to determine if their responses were significantly different. The comparisons made were between:

1. Younger group (aged 16-20) and the older group (aged 21-26).
2. Non-high school graduates and graduates.
3. Black students and white students.

Significance at the .05 confidence level was found in the following:

1. Non-high school graduates report more aspirations to self-employment.
2. The younger student reports having received assistance from high school counselors more often than the older student.
3. The black student reports of problems faced in school are dissimilar to the problems reported by white students.

The following conclusions were drawn and applied in formulating recommendations for the school's recruiting program:

1. The student has become acquainted with and selected his occupational goal prior to appearing at the institution.
2. Decisions regarding career choice are influenced more by friends and family than by school personnel.
3. The high school drop-out shows a measurable difference in aspirations and attitudes. This student will require special attention.
4. Enrolling in a vocational program is perceived as a sacrifice of personal resources by these students, and they make this sacrifice in order to reach their goal of success and acceptance into the occupation.
5. The school's direct effort at recruiting has not been as effective as the indirect methods employed through other persons and agencies.

The chief recommendations are to: (1) recognize the high degree of occupational orientation and intent of these students and emphasize the career in recruitment appeals; (2) develop the use of student body and graduates of the school as recruiters, and enlist the aid of the employing industries in the dissemination of information about the careers; and (3) additional and intensive study of the black student is needed in order to identify the appeals which are effective to this group.

W. R. Hawthorne (7/70)